(c) whether it is a fact that the level of ground water is going down due to the increase in the use of tubewells?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) and (d) Net Irrigated Area (NIA) figures are compiled by Minister of Agriculture and are published under Land Use Statistics (LUS). As per latest LUS for the year 1998-99, the percentage of land irrigated from canal in 1950-51 was about 40% which comes down to 31.1% in 1998-99, whereas the percentage of land irrigated from tube wells in 1950-51 was less than 0.6% which increased to 35.6% in 1998-99.

(c) The main reasons for decline in ground water level are repid pace of urbanisation; increasing demand for agricultural, industry and domestic purposes; change in cropping pattern and growing paddy and cash crops which consume large quantities of water; and excessive withdrawal of ground water particularly during drought when all other sources shrink.

Clearance for Bheema Lift Irrigation Project

2150. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMACHANDRAYYA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Government have been urged that the State Government of Andhra Pradesh to give administrative clearance for the Bheema Lift Irrigation Project, which got the techno-economic clearance in 1996;

(b) if so, whether the State Government has finally given its clearance for the Bheema Lift Irrigation Project;

(c) if so, whether both the Centre and the State have agreed to provide financial help and assistance in implementing the scheme; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Irrigation being a State subject, the responsibility of planning investigation, funding alongwith priority, execution, operation and

maintenance of irrigation projects, including irrigation and flood control primarily rests with the concerned State Governments themselves. The Central Government is providing Central Loan Assistance (CLA) under Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP) for such major and medium on-going projects which have been given investment clearance by the Planning Commission and are in an advanced stage of construction.

Protection of Guwahati from erosion

2151. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Guwahati City (Assam) is facing erosion problem at the site of Brahmaputra river specially from Sukhleshwar Ghat to Kamakhaya Temple for the last few years;

(b) whether it is a fact that if the erosion is not protected the M.G. Road at river site could collapse; and

(c) if so, the details of measures being taken or proposed to be taken by Government to protect Guwahati City by permanent solution?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) to (c) Flood Management including river erosion being a state subject, investigation, planning and implementation of flood management schemes are within the purview of the State Government. The Central Government renders assistance, which are technical, catalytical and promotional in nature.

It has been informed by the Government of Assam that the reach of the Guwahati City from Sukhleshwar Ghat to Kamakhaya temple is having some erosion in few patches for which prompt action is taken by the Water Resource Department, Government of Assam. Two schemes with a total estimated cost of Rs. 4.65 crore have been taken up by the Government of Assam to protect the MG Road at the river site of Brahmaputra from erosion. The Government of Assam has informed that the M.G. road is not under threat at present and on completion of the above schemes the bank will further stabilise. The State Government